



Recent Violence at Worship Centers

Montgomery County Office of Emergency Management
& Homeland Security



Recent Violence at Worship Centers

- 7/27/2008 – Knoxville Unitarian Universalist Church
 - Gunman entered church during youth performance of *Annie*
 - 2 dead, 7 injured
 - Politically motivated; shooter wanted to kill liberals and Democrats
- 8/5/2012 – Sikh Temple of Wisconsin
 - Gunman opened fire approx. 10:25 a.m.
 - 6 dead, 4 injured
 - Racially motivated; shooter was a white supremacist

Recent Violence at Worship Centers

- 6/17/2015 – Emanuel AME Church, Charleston, SC
 - Gunman entered church around 8:00 p.m., sat in on a Bible study/prayer meeting for 1 hour before opening fire
 - 9 dead, 3 injured
 - Racially motivated; shooter was a white supremacist
- 1/29/2017 – Islamic Cultural Centre of Quebec City
 - Gunman entered mosque shortly after the scheduled 7:30 p.m. prayers began; started shooting at worshippers lingering in the mosque after the prayer
 - 6 dead, 19 injured
 - Shooter was a white nationalist with anti-Muslim views

Recent Violence at Worship Centers

- 9/24/2017 – Burnette Chapel, Antioch, TN
 - Gunman entered church from the rear at 11:15 a.m., shooting as he walked through the sanctuary
 - 1 dead, 7 injured
 - Racially motivated; shooter was a black supremacist, seeking revenge for Charleston, SC church shooting
- 11/5/2017 – First Baptist Church, Sutherland Springs, TX
 - Gunman entered church at 11:20 a.m. during Sunday service, shooting worshippers as he walked up and down the aisle
 - 26 dead, 20 injured
 - Shooting was not motivated by racism or prejudice against religion; gunman was motivated by a dispute with his mother-in-law

Recent Violence at Worship Centers

- 10/21/2018 – Tree of Life Congregation Synagogue, Pittsburgh, PA
 - Gunman entered building at 9:50 a.m. during scheduled Shabbat morning services and opened fire. Between 60 and 100 people in the building at the time.
 - 11 dead, ranging in age from 54 to 97; at least 6 injured, including 4 policemen.
 - Gunman was motivated by extreme anti-Semitism
- 3/15/2019 – Al Noor Mosque and Linwood Islamic Centre, Christchurch, New Zealand
 - Gunman began shooting at Al Noor Mosque at 1:40 p.m. during Friday Prayer, and continued at Linwood Islamic Center at 1:55 p.m.
 - 50 dead, 50 injured
 - Gunman was a white supremacist and alt-right extremist; livestreamed first attack on Facebook Live

Challenges Faced by Worship Centers

- Targeted Acts of Hate and Violence
- Open Access
- Mass Gatherings at Scheduled Times
- Limited Security Budgets

What is Montgomery County doing?

- *Security At Our Worship Centers* presentations
 - **OEMHS** – Securing Physical Infrastructure
 - **MCPD** – CRASE (Citizen Response to Active Shooter Events)
 - **MCFRS** – Response to Suspicious Packages and Bomb Threats
 - **Jewish Foundation of Greater Washington** – Security Challenges of Worship Centers
- Faith-Based Facilities Security Operating Grant
 - \$200K one-time grant to assist houses of worship in enhancing security staffing and planning
 - Grants awarded in March to twelve houses of worship in the County
- Additional Support and Assistance Offered by OEMHS and Montgomery County Police